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JIM

WHITE RIVER SHALE OIL CORPORATION

SUITE 500 PRUDENTIAL BUILDING, 115 SOUTH MAIN STREET
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84111
(801) 363-1170

AUG 2 3 1982

August 20, 1982

Mr. James W. Smith, Jr.
Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
State Office Building, Room 4241
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Mr. Smith:

Your letter to me of August 12, 1982, and a memorandum of August 6, 1982 prepared by Mr. Tom Portle of your staff, discussed several areas of concern relative to development of the White River Shale Project. This letter responds to the three principle issues mentioned in your letter in the following order; "unapproved disturbances", topsoil management, and project coordination relative to our commitments to DOGM.

"Unapproved Disturbances"

This item refers to two areas; the interim RV campsite located on Tract Ub and the runoff retention pond site on Tract Ua. While neither of these areas were specifically included in the limited approval of July 8, 1982, it was our understanding that your staff was aware of these activities. It was not our intention to mislead DOGM concerning our activities on-tract or to proceed with project-related development outside of the limited approval.

The interim RV campsite was developed after discussion with and approval of the Uintah County Commission and the Oil Shale Office. Due to the County's continuing problem of handling random camping by construction workers, the interim RV camp was intended to mitigate any adverse social impacts caused by the construction of roadway and bridge improvements in the area. The camp was under construction during the site visit by your staff on May 5, 1982. It is currently providing a convenient, temporary location for the RVs used by those working on the roads. While it would have been possible to develop another site off-tract, it was concluded that from a long-term viewpoint placing the temporary camp at the site of WRSOC's future RV camp would be the most environmentally suitable solution to the County's random camping problem.

The terrain of the interim camp is not similar to that of the proposed Bachelor Camp. The topography is very complex with a predominance of rock outcrops. There are many small drainages and very little topsoil. Prior to site development, however,

about 600 cubic yards of topsoil were removed, stored temporarily in a stockpile near our A-6 air station, and then redistributed along the slopes of the upgraded roadway for reclamation purposes. It is planned to decommission the camp by mid-1983 and delay any further work at this site until late-1985 just prior to construction of surface process facilities at our plant site. Of course, the RV site would be totally reclaimed upon abandonment of the project using topsoil materials stored elsewhere on-tract. As our letter to you of August 16, 1982 indicated, there is ample topsoil available from the first 110 acre increment of development to reclaim the areas disturbed during this phase of development (including the RV site).

The plant site retention pond area was the site of an unapproved disturbance. This was communicated by telephone to Mr. Portle on July 6, 1982, shortly after WRSOC became aware of the disturbance. The extent of disturbance in this area is estimated to be 4.6 acres (including the temporary topsoil stockpile area), not 10 acres as mentioned in Mr. Portle's memorandum. This disturbance occurred prior to WRSOC's implementing an improved system which strictly limits work areas. This system has been in effect since July 6, 1982 and has been successful in controlling work under our limited approval from DOGM.

The retention pond area has been successfully stabilized by contouring the disturbed areas. This site was inspected by your staff on August 4, 1982, immediately following several large thunderstorms. The site showed no signs of significant erosion. In fact, the undisturbed drainages upgradient from the pond area were much more severely eroded than the pond area itself. It was our impression that your staff was satisfied with our efforts to control erosion in this area.

As you know, it is our plan to construct a dam downgradient of this disturbance, which is within what will become the retention pond. We believe it is prudent to use the subsoil materials for borrow as needed for our project. This has the convenience of being near our development areas, is within an area already slated for development, and would provide more storage capacity within the pond. Prior to removing the borrow, the topsoil materials will be removed and stored as discussed in the Topsoil Management Plan and shown on revised Figure 1-3 (sheet 1 of 3), both of which were submitted to you on August 16, 1982.

Topsoil Management

As mentioned above, the WRSOC Topsoil Management Plan (August 16, 1982) outlines our plans relative to the recovery, storage, and reuse of topsoil for Phase I - Increment 1 of our

project. Detailed topsoil isopach maps have been prepared and are being used to guide our topsoil recovery efforts. This was evident during your staff's inspection trip. A soils engineer was present, as called for by the plan, to assist in the interpretation of the maps. Topsoil was being placed, as planned, in the first of two long-term stockpiles south of the mine area.

Section 3.1, Clearing and Grubbing, of the plan describes our plans to handle grubbed vegetation. During the construction stages of Phase I, vegetation, except for trees and other large perishable materials, will be track-rolled into the topsoil prior to recovery. The topsoil will then be removed to storage. We do not believe this approach will cause any problems relative to the stability of the stockpile and will, in fact, add needed organic matter to the topsoil.

Your letter indicated that a 20-foot depth of topsoil would occur at the subject stockpile. Our plans, as indicated on Drawing D-04-CE-12, Mining Facilities Topsoil Stockpile Rough Grading Plan, submitted to you on July 30, 1982, call for a two-tiered stockpile with a maximum depth of 15 feet. This is based upon 45,000 cubic yards capacity. This drawing is being used in the field to guide topsoil placement. Because of the sloping, tiered approach, the drawing may have been misinterpreted to show a 20-foot depth.

While our plans call for a 15-foot depth, based upon 45,000 cubic yards of topsoil, we do not believe that this is the maximum depth to which topsoil can be stored. Should more topsoil become available, it may be desirable to increase the depth of this or other stockpiles. We recognize this may have temporary deleterious effects on the microbial activity in the topsoil, however, this situation can be corrected prior to redistributing the topsoil.

As discussed in our Mining Permit Application, WRSOC plans to rehabilitate at the first opportunity those disturbed areas which will not be impacted further by construction activities. In this regard we have established as a priority the respreading of topsoil over developed embankments to a depth adequate to support revegetation in the fall. Further, it is our intention to provide a reserve of topsoil sufficient to reclaim all disturbed areas upon abandonment. For this reason long-term stockpiles will be developed and preserved. Our estimates indicate there should be sufficient topsoil available for both the short-term stabilization and long-term reclamation needs of this phase of the project.

Project Coordination

Without question, our understanding of DOGM's approach to carrying out its responsibilities for mining operations has improved during the course of your review of our mining permit application. However, we have attempted throughout this process to comply with DOGM's requests and stipulations. A substantial and continuing effort has been made to inform our field operations about all applicable stipulations and then to determine that necessary steps are being taken to comply with same. A comprehensive file of all permits, maps, environmental plans and criteria, and related documentation was established at the inception of construction activities and is maintained and used at the job site. We are aware that certain problems developed early in our field construction efforts, but improved procedures have been implemented and the problems resolved. Until your letter and the memorandum were received, we were unaware that your staff had any significant concerns about our activities.

In the future we would suggest that DOGM participate in our monthly tract coordination meetings, which include WRSOC and staff from several governmental agencies with authority for our project. Problems can then be addressed and resolved at that time without delay. We believe this will greatly improve communications, and thus coordination, among all parties involved with or interested in our project.

It is hoped that the above discussion will answer your questions about the project and will reflect our commitment to proceed in compliance with your requirements. WRSOC does plan to cooperate with DOGM and to develop our project in a responsible manner. If you have any further questions on this matter, please contact me or Mr. Ralph A. DeLeonardis.

Sincerely,

James W. Godlove

James W. Godlove
Director of Environmental Affairs

JWG/mjd

cc: P. A. Rutledge - OSO
T. L. Portle - DOGM